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A Young Man's Fancy.
Grace MacGowan Cooke.

The King of the Subdivision.
$150 Prize Story.
James O'Shaughnessy.

By Jove!
Grace Frances Bird.

Goddo, the Holy Monkey.
Henry Austin.

A Twentieth Century Wedding.
Annie Reese Locke.

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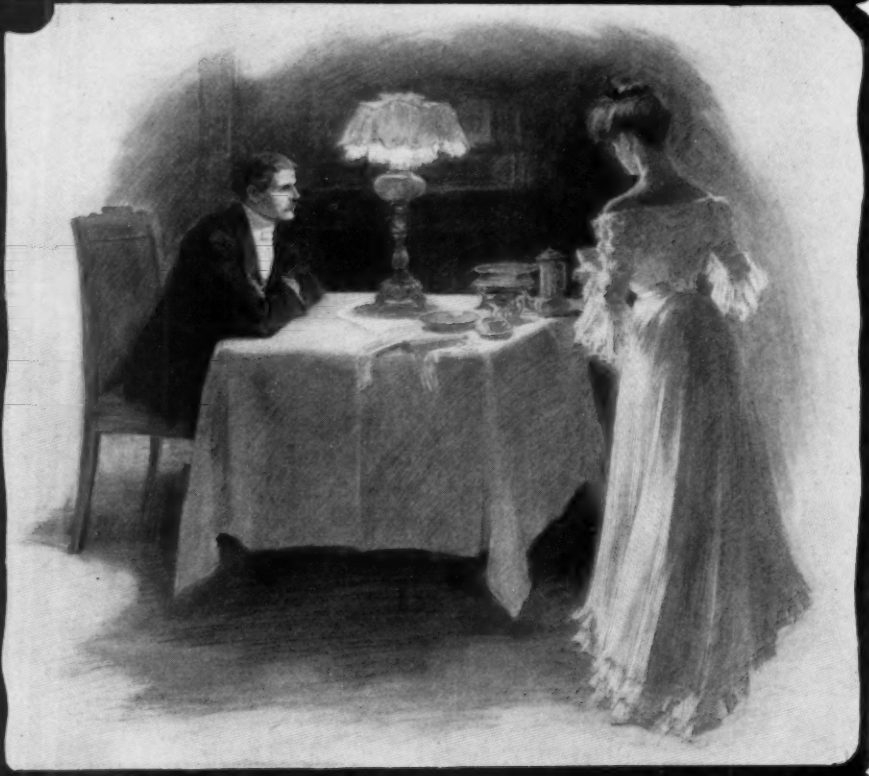
van Houten's Cocoa



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The Black Cat

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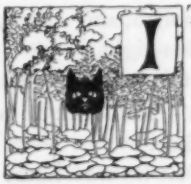
A Young Man's Fancy.*

BY GRACE MACGOWAN COOKE.

When the prairie's smile, like the smile of God,
Sends a blessing of beauty from bush and sod,
Then the birds sing loud, and the winds sing too,
That the earth is green and the sky is blue,
Like a dome of sapphire builded high —
Like nothing else but a Texas sky.
There is spring in the air and spring in your blood,
That beats through your heart in a quickened flood —
Till that heart, like a maverick, goes astray,
Poor yearling fool — let it play, let it play!
While the breeze is a sigh and the sun is a kiss,
All life was made for a day like this,
When under the span of these matchless skies,
You shall meet Dan Cupid, with bandaged eyes,
Riding the range.



IT took him by the throat in the first flush of primrose time. Spring comes early down there in southwest Texas. Marshall's ranch was all the land enclosed in a broad cañon. A mile of fence across the eastern end made him king of his own little country.

He had loved the life and exulted in it for ten years; and now, suddenly, just because the earth was green and the sky was blue, his heart was stormed by a thousand foolish emotions.

He took his pinto pony into his confidence as he rode, but the pinto had no wisdom wherewith to meet this strange emergency.

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Marshall was a long, lithe, brown young fellow, all bone and muscle. His clear gray eyes were never very widely opened, and they gave a lazy or indifferent turn to a countenance which would otherwise have been over-strenuous. A few people had trusted to that laziness and indifference, and been deceived.

As he rode up to his comfortable ranch house, he saw one of his cowboys — a small cockney Englishman, who had been a groom in the old country — exercising a milk-white pony up and down the long sandy drive from the front gate to the porch. She was a pretty creature, a grade horse, and Cockney Jim had thrown a red Navajo blanket over her, and let it dangle, skirt fashion.

"What in the mischief is that for?" called Marshall.

"I'm a-gentlin' a good 'oss for the Missus, 'gainst the time you bring her out," replied Jim, with cheerful impudence.

"You go to ——! Well, hang your impudence!" cried Marshall, with a little unnecessary heat, for he felt himself blushing under the ten layers of tan that ten Texas summers had given him. He laughed foolishly, and busied himself with his spur, which he fancied was coming loose.

"I get it from all quarters," he confided to the pinto. "The whole world is gone crazy." And then he went into the house and told his factotum, Manuel, to pack a grip for him, and send over for the major-domo, to inform him that he, Marshall, was called East, suddenly, to the bedside of a sick relative. As it was well known on the ranch that Marshall had not a relative in the world nearer than a second cousin, this statement caused more of the laughter which Marshall himself had called foolish, and which, as he was a strict disciplinarian, was kept out of his sight.

When he got over to Antelope, where he took the train, he sent a telegram to this one solitary second cousin, his sole link to a world that had women in it, to announce his coming.

He said to himself, with a whimsical smile, that he was homesick. He could find no fitter word to describe the longing that was in him, though at the bottom of his heart he recognized it as the stirrings of the primal race instinct; he knew that it was thus, and not otherwise, the heart of Adam yearned before his Creator sent that kindly sleep upon him and made such excellent use of a rib.

His telegram distinctly fluttered an exclusively feminine household in a small Massachusetts town. There was Mrs. Baldwin, the aforementioned second cousin, a woman of determination. There was Sarah, her daughter, who may be dismissed, safely, as the daughter of her mother. And there was Katharine Brent, a guest in the house, who thought it was extremely interesting to have a second or third cousin one had not seen for ten years coming all the way from Texas to visit one.

The mother and daughter held a guarded little consultation about the matter. Katharine was an extremely pretty and a very charming girl. "His coming now at this time, and in this way, can mean only one thing," said Mrs. Baldwin, decisively.

Sarah and Marshall had exchanged letters, perhaps a half dozen times, in the past ten years. There must always be some one affair to which a woman can refer as "the affair," and her third cousin, Robert Marshall, had served this useful purpose to Sarah Baldwin. But now she demurred.

"Oh, I don't know, mother," she remonstrated, "it's two years since I had the last letter from cousin Robert, and even then he wrote at Christmas time to send those resurrection plants and Mexican curiosities. It wasn't a — it wasn't that kind of a letter, you know."

"I think," said Mrs. Baldwin, severely, "that you ought to tell Katharine just how matters stand between yourself and Robert. It will save misunderstandings."

Speech is used for various purposes beside that of conveying mere information. You and I know that Mrs. Baldwin did not want Katharine Brent told just how matters stood between Robert Marshall and her daughter, but, rather, just how matters did not stand.

Sarah Baldwin was not an inventive person, but she managed, in the week before Marshall's arrival, by various hints and half-admissions, to convey the desired impression to Katharine Brent's mind.

When Marshall came, it chanced that they were all on the lawn together. Sarah gave him both hands, and earnestly wished that his kindly greeting had been a little more lover-like. She wished it mainly for the sake of Katharine, who was looking on.

Then she looked up, and saw that those quiet gray eyes of his

had gone past her and were gazing at Katharine Brent, exactly as though Katharine were the one whom he had come two thousand miles to see.

It is strange how perverse the human heart is. Mrs. Baldwin and Sarah would both have told you that the latter was just the wife for Robert Marshall, and, indeed, some of the neighbors might have agreed with them. Sarah was not at all a bad-looking girl, and she had a little money of her own; while Katharine Brent was an orphan, halting here at the Baldwin home for a few weeks after completing her college course before engaging in the profession for which it had fitted her.

And yet Robert Marshall had no more doubt, when he looked at Katharine Brent, that he had found his wife than he had of her beauty and sweetness.

The two weeks that followed his home-coming were tantalizing weeks. He could never see Katharine alone. If he asked her a question, it was ten chances to one that Mrs. Baldwin or Sarah answered it for her. She seemed to be hedged about in all directions by a mysterious barrier.

It wasn't because he was a man and a possible lover, he could see that; for the young rector of St. Jude's, who was a great friend of the family, could see her and talk to her and walk with her at any time. It occurred to Marshall more than once that the rector's attentions to Katharine were distinctly welcomed and encouraged, while he could not show her what he thought ordinary civilities. As the time for his departure approached, Marshall's impatience mounted. They were all sitting in the parlor one evening. The rector had been reading Kipling's "Recessional." Katharine was asked to sing, which she did very sweetly, riveting poor Marshall's chains with every note.

"Did you ever hear any of the Mexican music?" Marshall asked her, in a low tone. "It would suit your voice."

"Why would it?" she asked, smilingly.

"It requires a very flexible voice," he answered. "It has so many accidentals and odd little broken half-tones, which very few singers but the Mexicans themselves are able to give. I would love to hear you sing '*La Golondrina*' — that's 'The Swallow,' you know — let me show you how it goes."

Bob sat down on the music bench beside her. "No," he laughed, as she would have risen, "I can't play much. You stay here and I'll point out the keys for you to strike."

He had begun on the first bars of the exquisite melody. He turned an ardent, smiling glance across his shoulder to Katharine, as she sat beside him.

"See, that's how it goes. It is the Mexican 'Home, Sweet Home,' that is, I mean that they love it as we love 'Home, Sweet Home.'"

Katharine said something in reply, but it was lost in Sarah Baldwin's voice.

"What is that perfectly lovely thing you're playing, Cousin Robert? Why haven't we had you play for us before? I had forgotten how charmingly you do play. Is it a duet?"

Katharine was on her feet.

"Mr. Marshall was trying to show me some Mexican music," she said, coolly; then with a look at him that was anything but kindly, "Thank you, I don't believe I could ever learn it," and she walked over to where the rector and Mrs. Baldwin were discussing the best kind of plants for an herbaceous border. Her cheeks were flushed, and she displayed unnecessary vigor in expressing her opinion as to the plants.

How was poor Bob to know that she felt as though Sarah Baldwin suspected her of an unmaidenly attempt to get up a flirtation with another girl's promised husband?

He tried vainly all the evening to regain the ground he had mysteriously lost. "Mayn't I write out that song for you?" he begged, in a half-whisper aside. "Won't you try it?"

"Oh, thank you," she answered, in a rather raised tone, "Sarah plays so beautifully; if you'll just give her the air she can make a delightful piece of it."

The next day Bob tried putting a little note into Katharine's hand as he picked up her handkerchief for her.

"Is this something of yours?" she inquired, disengaging it from the folds of linen and holding it toward him.

They were under the battery of two pairs of eager and curious eyes, and Marshall assented, rather grimly, that it was his, but nothing of any account, as he took it. Something in Katharine's

face, some look of relenting, perhaps, made him determine, as he tucked his poor rejected note into his pocket, that he would make an end of this thing to-morrow. He was going the day after. To-morrow he would talk to her. It was absurd to think that he dared not come to the house, as any other young man might, and ask for her, without asking for his cousins.

That evening because fortune favors the brave, and making up your mind strongly to a thing is apt to bring that (or something else) about, Sarah was called from the room to attend the visit of a dressmaker, and her mother, a few moments later, went out to look after some household matter. Each thought the other would be back almost immediately, and for one long, delicious hour Bob sat and talked to Katharine.

He wasted no time in preliminaries. He sat down before her and asked her questions — as one having authority. Was she fond of horses? Ah, so was he. Did she like an outdoor life? He also delighted in it. That's what had taken him to Texas ten years before. Then he described the ranch to her with such earnestness that she finally interrupted him, laughing:

"See here, Mr. Marshall, are you a ranchman, or a real-estate agent? Do you want to sell me that ranch?"

"No," said Bob boldly, and his eyes were not lazy as he looked at her, "I want to give it to you."

Just then Sarah and Mrs. Baldwin came in hurriedly; but not before Marshall had heard, at some length, the story of Katharine's hopes, plans and prospects. He had found that his first impression of her was, as it always is, the right one; and he knew, not because she had told him or shown it in any unmaidenly fashion, that the first strong attraction had been mutual; so when he went to the Baldwins' that last day, he had it all beautifully planned.

He would ring the bell and ask for Miss Katharine Brent. He didn't want Sarah nor her mother. He would see them later, when he and Katharine had settled their affairs.

Now observe how ill he plans who plans only for victory.

When Marshall opened the gate at the Baldwins' they were all on the lawn, and the rector was with them. It was a very warm day for early May, and the chairs and a table, with books, some work and a tea-tray on it, had been moved out there.

Poor Katharine's cheeks were scarlet as she greeted him. A long night of wakeful misery over the things she had said and the things she had listened to from Sarah Baldwin's affianced had left her with a feeling of spent and weary melancholy that was almost despair.

How dared he talk so to her! And yet, always, there was the conviction that it was she, and not Sarah, whom he loved; and the belief that it was she, and not Sarah, who could make his life's happiness.

Marshall sat down and took the cup of tea his cousin offered him, very quietly. He didn't drink tea, but it gave him an opportunity for reflecting and planning. He stirred it so long and so solemnly, as he went over every possible course of action, that his cousin Sarah finally cried in despair, "Robert, I know you like things sweet; but really, that's the seventh lump of sugar, and I don't think —"

There was a general laugh. "I do like sweet things," returned Marshall gravely. "Miss Katharine, will you walk down to the beach with me? I want to say good-bye."

There was a sort of horrified hush. "Why, you're not going right now," returned Katharine, in a very low tone.

"Oh, no," replied Marshall, "not till to-morrow morning, but I have a lot of things to tell you, and —"

"How we shall all miss you," broke in Mrs. Baldwin's calm tones. "I really think Sarah and I will have to pay you that long-promised visit some time next year."

"The long-promised visit" was almost, if not quite, an inspiration of the moment. There may have been some talk of the sort, but Marshall had forgotten it. Its mention, however, served the purpose well. The rector was reminded of a visit he had promised to pay, and which he was going to compass within the next two years. He described this at some length. Sarah added details of an outing of her own the spring before. Katharine had been one of the party at that time. Sarah strove vainly to draw her into the conversation about it.

The culprit, I may say both culprits, sat silent, while the three "good people" talked vivaciously, not so say industriously.

But the silence of the two differed. Katharine's was the mute-

ness of utter misery. Marshall was quiet because he was planning more and greater atrocities.

Suddenly Katharine rose, with a little inarticulate murmur. "I'll get those roses," she said to Mrs. Baldwin, "and dress our tea table, as you asked me to."

She went to where the big, old-fashioned Prairie Queen clambered all over the porch, and began cutting clusters of pink blossoms. Standing in the sunlight, with her arms upraised, she looked so lovely that Sarah Baldwin regretted that Marshall was there to see. She glanced toward him. He was looking at Katharine.

Sarah started over with the intention of seating herself beside her cousin and having a last good long talk.

Now, I think it is a pity that individuals are not provided with gauges, such as one may see upon steam boilers, to register the pressure of the steam within. If there had been such a gauge as that anywhere about Robert Marshall, so that his cousin, Sarah Baldwin, could have known just how near the point marked "dangerous" things were coming, she would never have gone as she did, nor spoken as she did, appropriating him, placing herself just where she cut off his view of Katharine — for, mark the result! This action of hers made the pressure just one ounce too much.

Katharine drew back her hand with a little exclamation of pain. Marshall rose and went swiftly over to where she stood. "Did you hurt yourself?" he said. "Is the thorn in there?"

"Never mind," returned Katharine hastily. "It is all right. Oh, yes, I think the thorn is in still," as he took her small, tremulous hand in his two strong brown ones, and began looking for it, "there in the wrist."

"Don't flinch so, child. I won't hurt you. There now. Steady! Out she comes!"

He held her hand after the thorn was out, and looked at it whimsically. It appeared very small, and white, and helpless. He waited until he was aware that all three of the others were regarding them intently and curiously. Then he said, exactly as though they were alone:

"When I was a child and hurt myself, my mother used always to kiss the place and make it well." He raised the little white

wrist quite deliberately to his lips and kissed it; then he dropped an arm lightly around Katharine's wrist.

"My good friends," he said calmly, turning to the other three, "this young lady and I expect to be married before I go back next week. Naturally we have a good deal to arrange. I'm afraid she has been too shy too tell you about it, but now we're going to walk down on the beach and talk it over."

When they came back an hour later, two very happy people, with "the light that never was on land nor sea" shining serenely from their faces, the rector had gone.

Mrs. Baldwin and Sarah sat disconsolate. "Well," said the latter, "of all crazy things! How long has this engagement been a fact, may I ask?"

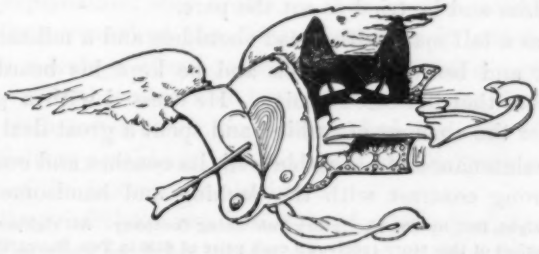
Katharine hung her head, laughing and blushing; but Sarah's angry eye caught the gleam of a big diamond on her finger.

"Why did you never show me that before?" she cried, pouncing on it. "Aren't you going to tell me how long you two have been engaged?"

"I just brought the ring this afternoon," answered Marshall, speaking for both; "but the engagement, — why, bless your soul, Sally dear, I left one of the cowboys exercising Kate's horse when I rode over to take the train at Antelope."

There was a general chorus of surprise, and Marshall heard Kate's voice in it.

"Oh, I did. You needn't think the horse isn't there. It's a good one, and it's a white one, and its name is Texas."



The King of the Subdivision.*

BY JAMES O'SHAUGHNESSY.

MERELY the closing down of the George Salsbury Chemical Works would have been sufficient to have caused a sensation in the neighborhood, because everybody thereabout was dependent, directly or indirectly, on its pay roll. The manner in which it was closed was extraordinary in the absence of an explanation, and the following day it was discovered that Mrs. Victoria Salsbury, the wife of George Salsbury, the proprietor of the factory, was missing. Out of these circumstances grew rumors of a startling kind. George Salsbury had been acting rather strangely before the factory was closed, and his conduct then and since had been of a sort that finally led to a terrible suspicion that would be most easily dispelled by the return of his wife.

For years the factory had been regarded as an establishment that was bringing riches every year to its owner. When it was built it stood alone in one of the wide prairie patches of Chicago. Residences quickly sprang up around it, and these were followed by grocery stores, butchers' shops, bakeries and saloons, until the vicinity was like a little town and was known as Salsbury subdivision. George Salsbury was called the "King of the Subdivision." He suggested the title, it was said. At any rate, it pleased him and he tried to act the part.

He was a tall man, with broad shoulders and a military bearing. His hair and beard were black and he kept his beard trimmed with a care that indicated vanity. He dressed with a punctilious regard for the changes of fashion and spent a great deal of money in the maintenance of his stable with its coaches and coach horses.

In strong contrast with the dashing and handsome figure of

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* The writer of this story received a cash prize of $150 in THE BLACK CAT story contest ending March 31, 1900.

George Salsbury was that of his wife. She was small, and her manner was retiring. Her shoulders were stooped and her hands were knotted from hard work. They had begun married life poor and her patient toil and diligent care at saving had contributed much toward starting him as a manufacturer and on the road to fortune. He had adapted himself with easy grace to his improved conditions. She had drudged so long that she could find contentment only in drudgery. When he went driving she remained at home to watch after the polishing of pans and the saving of scraps.

When fortune really came she didn't realize it, and in consequence they drifted out of each other's companionship. His friends were men of affairs and men of fashion. Her friends were the wives of the men who worked in her husband's factory. In time these housewives related gossip concerning her husband, and her contentment, dull as it was, was broken.

One morning a neighboring housewife came to visit her, but no one answered at the door, and the house seemed deserted. The neighbor had come to enquire why the factory had been shut down that morning. Everybody in the subdivision was trying to find out the reason of it. At the hour for beginning work, Salsbury had met the men at the factory door and told them there was no more work there. He gave them no reason for it, and on account of his imperious and autocratic bearing toward his employés, none of them pressed him for an explanation. He took them into the office and paid them the wages due them.

After the men had left the factory, Salsbury remained inside, closing and locking the door after them. When they had got over the first surprise at being thrown out of work without notice and without explanation, they broke up into groups, talking it over. Some of them remarked the unusual manner in which Salsbury acted that morning; that he seemed troubled and dispirited; that his hair was dishevelled and his clothing was not arranged and brushed with usual care. Soon it reached the ears of the men that the Salsbury residence, the rear yard of which extended to the rear door of the factory, was deserted.

All of the subdivision was in a state of subdued excitement that night. The next morning smoke was seen coming from the tall

chimney of the factory. The men quickly gathered about it, thinking work had been resumed, but they found the doors locked and the windows shuttered. For three days they watched and waited for some sign that work would begin again in the factory. Twice at night Salsbury was seen going, by the back way, from the factory to the house and returning to the factory again, and that was the only sign of life about the premises.

These mysterious circumstances, taken with the continued absence of Mrs. Salsbury, were brought to the notice of the police. The next day a policeman went to the factory, but could not gain admission. Salsbury was in the factory at the time and undoubtedly knew the policeman had called, for within an hour he came out and went directly to the police station and gave notice that his wife was missing. He was taken into the captain's private office and interrogated. He said he did not know what had become of his wife, but he believed she had run away while her mind was temporarily deranged.

"Why didn't you notify us sooner?" asked the captain.

"Because I believed she would be back before this."

"What are you going to do about it?"

"Oh, nothing. She will come back."

After telling the captain to let the matter rest, as there was no occasion for any police interference, he stalked out of the station. For two days then the police had been active in the matter. The day following they made forcible entry of the house and factory, and the next day Salsbury was arrested, charged with the murder of his wife.

The evidence they produced indicated a crime of the most revolting character. In a big vat in the basement of the factory they found some small pieces of bones and the wedding ring of Mrs. Victoria Salsbury — a gold band ring with the initial letters "V. S." engraved on the inner side. With this ring was found a narrow guard ring. The bones were identified as the phalanges of a human finger. An analysis of the liquid in the vat in which the rings and bones were found showed it to be a solution of potash. It was deduced from this and the corroborative evidence obtained that Salsbury had put the body of his wife into a vat of boiling potash and reduced it until nothing recogniz-

able remained but tiny fragments of bones and the tell-tale rings.

While the world was shuddering at the horror of the crime with which he was charged, Salsbury remained calm and seemingly unconcerned. He took the trouble, however, to employ legal counsel and set up in defence that his wife was not dead and that the rings were not his wife's rings. In further disproof of the State's theory of the murder he contended that a human body could not be disintegrated by potash in the manner indicated. To sustain this contention a cadaver of a woman, of the size and age of his wife, was taken to the factory and boiled in the same vat, under the conditions alleged by the State.

This weird proceeding was witnessed by anatomists, chemists, surgeons, microscopists and osteologists. Their testimony was that such a process could not destroy a human body. This demonstration served the prosecution as well as the defence, for it gave an explanation of why the factory chimney was smoking the morning after the employés had all been dismissed. The State's attorneys concluded that Salsbury had fired the furnaces to incinerate what the potash would not dissolve.

More than one hundred witnesses were called to testify against Salsbury. One of them was an old man who had been for years the night watchman in the factory. On the night of Mrs. Salsbury's disappearance he had been sent away from the factory on errands twice. Salsbury had sent him to a drug store each time for medicine, once at ten o'clock and once at eleven o'clock. The bottles he had got were introduced as evidence. Neither had ever been opened.

Another witness testified that at eleven o'clock that night he had seen Mr. and Mrs. Salsbury going from the house to the factory by the rear way. Another testified that while passing the building at eleven o'clock that night he had heard a strange, wild cry in it. In the remainder of the old watchman's testimony he said that Salsbury stayed in the factory all night, spending much of the time in the basement, where the vat was situated. More significant still, he said Salsbury had kept him out of the basement, although that was in his usual rounds. When he was leaving in the morning, he said, his employer was sitting in the office, still dressed and looking worn and troubled.

The evidence on which the prosecution was based, however, was that furnished by the rings. A housewife from the subdivision testified that she had often seen Mrs. Salsbury wearing the rings. She added artlessly and without apparent appreciation of the crushing conviction of it, that they might not be Mrs. Salsbury's rings, because Mrs. Salsbury had not been able to get her rings off for years.

In establishing a motive for the murder, witnesses were produced who testified that Salsbury had intimated that he wanted his wife out of the way, so that he might marry a woman who was better fitted to his station in life. What was regarded as the most clever piece of police diplomacy in the case was the bringing forward of a woman with whom Salsbury was reputed to be in love, as a witness against him. This woman testified, while verging on a state of hysteria, that Salsbury had told her he wanted his wife out of the way, and that he would get her out of his way; that she was a clod in his path and he was tired of her.

The first of the witnesses for the defence testified in support of the contention of the accused that his wife was still living. They testified to having seen her, and some with having conversed with her, since the day of her alleged murder. A dozen of such witnesses testified, each that he had seen her in a different place, distant from Chicago.

Other witnesses testified that Mrs. Salsbury had talked of running away from her husband and had given indications of unsoundness of mind. It was admitted by the defence that Mrs. Salsbury was jealous of her husband's attentions to other women, and probably with cause. Salsbury's actions in the factory the night of his wife's disappearance were explained by his testimony. He said he was experimenting with the manufacture of soft soap. He discharged the workmen from his factory and shut it down, he said, because he had discovered his wife's absence that morning, and he felt so distressed that he didn't want to be burdened with the cares of the factory, and no one could manage it but himself.

The rings were shown to him and he was asked if they were his wife's rings. He said they were not; that his wife's wedding ring had the word "Victoria" engraved in it.

In rebuttal, a jeweller and engraver testified that seventeen years

before he had sold such a ring to George Salsbury and had engraved on the inner side the initial letters "V. S." just as they were engraved in that ring.

There had been weeks of wrangling over the bones in evidence, between the scientists engaged as experts on both sides, and much doubt was thereby raised as to the bones being human. But there was no doubt as to the identity of the rings. The jury hesitated, and then convicted Salsbury, and his punishment was fixed at imprisonment for life.

Efforts to get a new trial for him failed. When it was undertaken to appeal the case it was found that Salsbury was penniless. His fortune had been dissipated and with it went his friends. He could not defray the cost of transcribing the voluminous record, and without a transcript of it there could be no appeal, and he was taken to the penitentiary.

As the prison doors were closing upon him, he reasserted his innocence and his belief that his wife would one day return. The prison officials said that every convict in the place contended he was innocent. Without any useless ceremony they clipped off his glossy black hair, shaved away the beard to which he had devoted so much care, denuded him of his fashionable worldly garb, put him in a suit of prison stripes and set him to drill in the lock step.

Thus stripped even of his name, and known instead by a number, his serene self-possession never left him. He was put at work in the stone yard of the prison and he worked at the hard labor cheerfully, although it blistered his hands. He was then set at menial work and he performed that as smilingly as if he had never been called the "King of the Subdivision." Then he was transferred to the drug dispensary, where his knowledge of drugs and chemistry would make him of more value to the economy of the prison. Now and then, as the years were passing, he would say his wife was slow in returning. As he never made complaint nor violated the prison regulations the guards, out of pity, would humor him and assent. Five, ten, fifteen years passed, and still he talked of his wife's returning. Still the guards assented, to humor him.

Twenty years had passed since he began his life sentence, when a woman called at the prison and asked to see George Salsbury.

She was taken to the visitors' room in the chaplain's office and told to wait. She shifted nervously in the chair till the door opened and a great, broad-shouldered man in striped prison clothing came shuffling in, in lock-step tread. His close-cropped hair and stubble beard were white, but his cheeks were ruddy and his eyes were clear. Twenty years of penal servitude had not broken his figure, although it had changed his hair and beard from black to white and had taken the majesty out of his stride. He stood erect almost as finely as when in the old days he stalked imperiously through the subdivision. He looked down on the bent little figure of the gray-haired woman who stood before him.

She studied him from head to foot before speaking.

"Don't you know me?" she said, calmly.

He shook his head doubtingly.

"I am your wife," and her thin, hard voice had not a quaver of emotion in it.

Knots and ridges stood out on his forehead. His breast heaved and his eyes flashed, but his arms remained hanging motionless at his side as twenty years of prison discipline had taught them.

"Can't you speak?" she said, sharply.

His lips relaxed into a sneering smile.

"I am your wife. You must know me."

"How did the rings get into the vat?" he asked, suddenly breaking his silence.

"I put them there."

An expression of doubt came into his face again.

She held up her left hand.

The ring finger was missing.

"Damn it, why didn't I think of that at the trial?"

The warden of the prison entered just then, having been secretly summoned by the chaplain, who was a witness to the strange and extraordinary meeting.

"This woman says she is Mrs. Salsbury," explained the chaplain.

"I would like to talk with her privately for a little while," said Salsbury.

The amazed officials gave consent and stood watching with staring eyes the strange couple conversing in whispers in the farthest corner of the room. For a quarter of an hour the whispered con-

versation continued and then Salsbury kissed her. Taking her hand he approached the waiting officials.

"Gentlemen, this is my wife. Talk with her and satisfy yourselves. Let me know as soon as you can when I will be free. May I return to my work?"

The warden nodded and Salsbury left the room without looking back or saying good-bye.

She sat down to talk with the officials. She said she had come back because she felt he had suffered enough, and wanted to have him released.

"Did you know he was in prison all the time?" asked the warden in new astonishment.

"Oh, yes. He wanted to put me away, but I was too quick and too shrewd for him, but that's all past now."

"Did you plan his conviction?"

"Yes; I can tell you all about it briefly. I knew for some time he was tired of me. He had got too rich for the wife that had helped to make his fortune and he wanted a divorce. I stole into the factory one night while he was talking in his private office with a woman and I overheard them. While I listened he promised this woman he would marry her as soon as I was out of his way. I need not describe my feelings. I was the same as any other woman at being scorned, but I knew more than other women in finding revenge.

"As I made my way through the darkness from the office my hand fell upon a hatchet. I knew as much about the factory, nearly, as he. I was thinking rapidly then. I hurried to the basement, to the big potash vat, taking the hatchet with me. I knew I couldn't pull the rings from my finger, so I placed the finger on the edge of the vat and chopped it off. It fell into the potash. I tied up my bleeding hand with my apron and hurried to the house. I gathered up a few things in a hurry and went away."

"And then?" asked the warden, prompting her to go on.

"The next day I wrote a note to the police in which I said: 'Mrs. Salsbury is missing. Look in the big potash vat in the basement of the George Salsbury Chemical Works.' I signed no name to it."

"Where did you go when you left the house?"

"That's all I will tell you. That's enough for you to know. I was dead to the world and dead to myself all these years."

Further endeavors to learn something of her movements during her absence were fruitless. The only question with which the prison officials were concerned was whether she was really Mrs. Salsbury. The chaplain's account of the meeting seemed to set all doubts at rest for a moment, only to raise them the next instant. Would husband and wife have acted so, they asked themselves. Since husband and wife never before met under such circumstances the question could not be answered by precedent. The story she told was the strangest that had ever been recited in that prison, and yet the warden believed it. The whole affair was utterly lacking in human probability, and yet he could not escape the conviction that it was true.

For the guidance of the prison warden, there were the acts of the courts. A court had declared Mrs. Salsbury to be dead, and he was bound by his oath of office to accept the decree. Nevertheless, he believed it was she who stood before him in life. Bereft of its complexities, however, the situation presented the simple alternatives of leaving Salsbury in prison or of proving the identity of the woman as Mrs. Victoria Salsbury. If the latter were done the courts would quickly restore her legal existence and the release of her husband would follow.

Mrs. Salsbury was taken to Chicago and turned over to the police for identification. There were many policemen who knew her husband, but none knew her. Twenty years had wrought great changes. The old factory and the house of the Salsburys were among the few things there in the subdivision that time had not changed. They were standing tenantless, sadly weather-beaten, and going to decay. Through these scenes Mrs. Salsbury was taken and she proved her familiarity with them by references to the past. There had been a skating pond in the prairie. Now it was studded with brick and stone houses. There had been a row of frame cottages occupied by the families of men who worked for her husband; now a solid row of massive business houses stood there. A great cluster of lilac bushes grew in the yard back of her kitchen window, she said. The clump of bushes, surviving

the years, was still there. She described the interior arrangement of the house and of the factory correctly. She stood by the vat in the basement again, and showed how she had chopped off her finger so that the rings could be cast into the potash and produce evidence that would convict her husband of murder.

All of this, however convincing to the policemen who accompanied her, was not court evidence. She was not yet identified. No one appeared who would say positively that she was Mrs. Salsbury. Then it was learned that in a distant part of the city the former night watchman of the factory was still living. Without telling her where she was being taken or notifying him, she was confronted with the old watchman. He was an old man twenty years before, and now in his last days he was blind.

"Isn't that old Jan?" she asked, with a show of surprise when she saw him.

The old man started at the sound of her voice and offered to rise from his chair. He was feeble and dropped back into it.

"Who speaks?" he cried, while his lips trembled and his hands clutched the arms of the chair nervously.

"Don't tell him who you are," whispered one of the policemen.

"Don't you know me?" she asked.

"No, no. I thought it was — it sounded like *her* voice," said the old man, shaking his head.

"Like whose voice?" she asked.

"It is the voice of a woman long dead, so they say, but I won't say it. I said enough then, but I told the truth."

"Suppose that woman is living."

"If she is, then you are that woman. You are Mrs. Salsbury."

"I am Mrs. Salsbury."

The old man lifted his hands, uttering praises to God, while tears streamed down his furrowed cheeks.

The testimony of this tottering, sightless old man was adduced in legal form in corroboration of Mrs. Salsbury's own testimony. There was no evidence in contradiction, and as there was no protest of the identification she was declared to be living and an order was issued to set George Salsbury free.

"The rings?" asked Mrs. Salsbury. "I am again his legal wife. I want my wedding ring."

In a musty corner of the vault of the criminal court clerk's office the rings were found and restored to her.

That night her husband came out of the penitentiary, and she was walking by his side. Before leaving the prison he made a written statement, which he instructed the warden to give to the newspapers. It read:

"I am going back into the world to make another fortune. That is all I care for. This is all I care to say for publication.

GEORGE SALSBURY."

Salsbury and his wife disappeared on their arrival in Chicago. The next the public knew of him he was the lessee of the old factory and residence in the subdivision. Not long afterward, smoke was coming out of the big chimney again. He had renovated the building, gathered workmen and material and once more the George Salsbury Chemical Works were in operation. He had proceeded with marvellous rapidity for a man seeking countenance among business men as an ex-convict, denuded of friends, of credit, of reputation and broken in purse. Wagons soon were busy hauling to and from the factory, and before the year was ended the working force had been increased to the extent of the factory's capacity, working day and night. It was said that while in prison he had discovered many secrets of chemical processes, of value in manufacturing, in addition to those he had employed to make his business successful before.

Almost as fast as his fortune had run away from him, it came pouring back. When riches began to return to him he was again called the "King of the Subdivision," as he stalked its highways. He was imperious and reserved in other days. Now he was imperious and morose. He dressed with his former scrupulous regard for fashion, and his beard, now white and grown again, he trimmed with nice care. Again he had fine horses and coaches and coachmen in his stable.

If he were unhappy, no one could be sure of it. People never discussed the question of his happiness without speaking of his wife. She never went driving with him, in fact she scarcely left the house, and had not been known to go outside the yard since her return. Some of the neighboring women called to visit her as the nearby housewives did in the old days. The servant who answered the ringing of the doorbell told them Mrs. Salsbury did

not care to receive visitors. None other called and she remained secluded. She seemed unhappy and broken in spirit and formed a pathetic contrast with her mastering, self-sufficient and kingly husband. The neighbors said she was suffering the pangs of remorse and was denying herself in expiation of the wrong she had done her husband. People expressed sympathy for him on account of the suffering he had unjustly endured and felt pleasure that he was prospering again. None had sympathy for her, though many felt pity.

Whether he loved her now, or whether it were possible to love one so miserable, the people asked one another. And they asked one another if he had forgiven her, or if it were possible to forgive a wife who had planned with such diabolism the death of her husband. These questions found no satisfying answer, nor did the question of how much justification she was entitled to plead by the knowledge that her husband had conspired with another woman to cast her off. The conclusion was reached, however, by most people that he didn't seem to have any love for her. And now that he was free they wondered that he lived with her at all, but whatever he felt toward her was his secret.

By day and by night his factory was kept going with relays of workmen, and the demand for its product always exceeding the output. When it was suggested that he enlarge the factory, he curtly answered that it was large enough to please him. It was just the same as when he owned and managed it before. He added nothing nor made any alterations. He had simply restored it.

One day he bought a new vehicle. He had bought one each year since he returned to his factory, and this was the fifth. It was a trap with a high-perched seat and brilliant and gorgeous trimmings. The next afternoon he appeared on the driver's seat, guiding two dark bay horses that pranced proudly in their gilded harness. A footman sat behind. He drew up to the front gate and waited. He had never done that before. The front door of the house opened and Mrs. Salsbury came out, gorgeously dressed and smiling. The footman assisted her to the high seat beside her husband, who held the lines. They drove away and it was nearly sundown when they returned. She was smiling still and he was laughing and talking to her as if he were in a jovial mood. The

neighborly folks of the subdivision gossipped about the event until late that night.

Salsbury entered the factory just before the night shift came to work. He called the foremen and told them the factory would not be run that night. The foremen knew the press of orders for goods was always greater than the capacity to supply them, but they knew the master of the factory. He never asked their advice nor took suggestions from them. He was master there and they obeyed. The men of the night shift came and were turned away.

The next morning the factory doors were locked when the workmen arrived. The clerks and the men of all the departments of the factory stood around outside, wondering and waiting. At one o'clock the front door of the factory was opened and Salsbury stood on the threshold. The men scarcely knew him. He was stooped and his face was seamed and haggard. Only the day before they had seen him erect and ruddy cheeked. Now his eye was dull and his hand was trembling. He surveyed the crowd for awhile but no one spoke to him.

"Are all of the men here?" he asked.

"I think so," said a foreman.

"Tell them to come in and get their money."

The men filed in and the accountants and clerks went to their places in the office and made out the time of the men and gave them the wages due. Salsbury was sitting in his private office with his head resting on his arms on the desk. The chief clerk went to the door of the office and stopped. Salsbury looked up.

"What shall I do now?" asked the clerk.

"Are the men all paid?"

"Yes."

"Have you got your wages?"

"Yes."

"Go."

"Isn't the factory going to run any more?"

"Fool!"

The clerk backed away in silence. Salsbury rose and staggered out of the office. All of the employés had gone, except the office men.

"I said go," he shrieked.

They silently obeyed. The door was slammed after them and they heard the bolt turn in its lock.

No sign of life was seen about the factory for two days, and then the police came. They knocked at the doors, but got no answer. They went to the house, but it, too, seemed deserted, and in the stable they found the horses, untended and unfed. The police looked at one another as if each knew what the other was thinking. One old man among them had worked on the "Salsbury case" twenty-five years before. They asked his opinion.

"I have long since learned to be cautious," he said. "I helped convict that man, and I lived to see his wife come back."

They returned to the station and a council was held, with the result that all of the available men at the station were sent out on the new Salsbury case. The footman was found quickly. He said he had been discharged without notice or explanation as soon as he returned to the stable the afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Salsbury went driving. The other stable employés and the house servants were dismissed at the same time.

Policemen were posted in the shadows that night, watching every door of the house and of the factory. At one o'clock in the morning Salsbury was seen to come out of the rear door of the factory, cross the back yard and enter the house by the rear door. He remained in the house half an hour and returned to the factory by the way he had come. Nothing more was learned on the premises by the police, but other men working on the case brought in a mass of information, all of which contributed to the suspicions of the police, and all remarkably like the circumstances of the Salsbury case of a quarter of a century before. Then it was recalled that the night the factory was shut down was the anniversary of the disappearance of Mrs. Salsbury. It was the same day of the year, month and week.

At noon the police forced open a door of the residence and entered. No one was there. The rear door of the factory was then broken and the police went in. They explored it cautiously until they reached Salsbury's private office. There they found the master of the factory with his head on his arms resting on a desk.

He raised his head slowly. His eyes were bloodshot, his face was haggard, seamed and soiled, and his hair was dishevelled.

"What did you come for?" he asked, calmly.

"We thought something might be wrong — that you might be sick," said the commanding officer, pleasantly.

"You're a liar. You came to arrest me."

"Why, what have you done?" he demanded in startled tones.

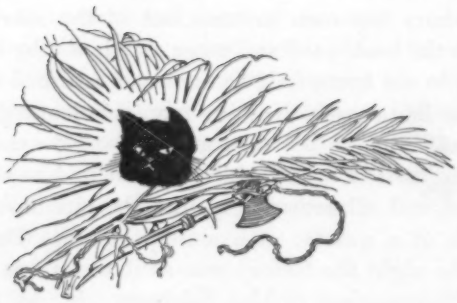
"Killed her! What do you suppose I did?"

"When?"

"Read the indictment. I followed it to the letter. If you don't believe me, go down to the vat and fish the rings out again."

"You say you have murdered your wife!" exclaimed the officer, snatching the paper from the grimy and wrinkled hand of the old man.

"Oh, that need not concern you any; I've been tried for that crime."



By Jove!*

BY GRACE FRANCES BIRD.

E were journeying eastward, homeward — our backs to the setting sun. Twice I glanced apprehensively over my shoulder at that clear-cut, rayless disc to see it poised motionless on the edge of the awful blackness beneath; again when I looked, it had dropped away from sight, engulfed in the ominous mass of cloud which had been grumbling over the hill-tops for the past half hour.

Suppressing a little nervous shiver, I turned and fastened my gaze resolutely upon the ears of my mule, with their ceaseless flapping back and forth, and their very stolidity afforded relief from the maddening depression which pervaded everything else. Here and there stood a barren tree, parched with the heat and shrouded in a gray mantle of dust. Every blade of grass had shrivelled under the scorching breath of drought. Before us the open plain stretched white and still, quivering with the heat of the day. Behind, that mass of purple blackness, churned up with waves of greenish-gray, was gliding with terrifying haste up into the remaining space of paling blue. Beside me rode the only other human soul in sight — Jack Renford, my husband. I could feel the questioning of his dark eyes, but would not turn to him lest I should betray the terror I was struggling so hard to conceal. His own thoughts, I knew, must be sombre enough without the added gloom of my silly fears. And so I continued my scrutiny of Juliette's ears, and, to show my tranquillity, even hummed a little tune. This effort miscarried, however, for presently a firm brown hand closed over mine and a strong arm held me tight. Our mules, with the intelligence of their kind, stopped simultaneously, and I looked up into the quizzical, smiling eyes of my husband.

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"Scared, eh?" he laughed. Then, feeling me tremble, "What, *really* frightened, little one? Well, then, come down out of that, and we'll pitch tent for the night. You'll feel safer under cover."

His cheeriness put new life into my heart, but at the same instant came a vivid flash, and I slid with a little shriek into his arms. A dizzy faintness swept over me, and Jack's voice sounded miles away.

"Come, come! It won't hurt us — and what if it should? Better shuffle off the earth, hand in hand, all in a second, with a few million volts in our systems, than to keep on this way, with a prospect of nothing but hollowness in them. More cheerful, at any rate!"

And really, viewing matters in that light, my fright *did* seem foolish. I never much fancied the idea of starving to death, anyway. So up I jumped, and hurriedly undertook my share of the work; and in almost no time we were snugly huddled together under our tent. As the first drops fell Jack peered out for a last survey.

"Well, we *are* in for a ripper!" he cried. Then he quickly added, when he saw my quivering lip:

"We're serene enough here, at any rate. Fine shelter. That old boulder will keep off the worst of the blow, and in case the lightning should strike here, think, dear, what an imposing headstone we'll have, free of charge! An inscription would add to its artistic effect — 'Sacred to the memory of'" —

But my hands covered my ears, shutting out the remainder of his levity and at that he drew his mouth into such a comical expression of mock solemnity that I laughed in spite of myself, and undertook to look out, too; and this is what I saw! Towering protectingly over our tent was a boulder some ten feet in height. It stood out in bold relief against the storm blackness — a great mass of quartz, smooth and white as polished marble, only lacking an inscription, as Jack had suggested, to convert it into a fitting monument of death.

A flash which rent the sky quickly drove my head back to shelter, and as I crept up to Jack and felt his protecting arms closing around me, I nestled down with a little sigh of content, feeling for the first time a sense of security from the storm.

We did not speak much. We just sat and listened and thought; and it seemed odd when we discovered afterward that our thoughts had drifted along the same channel — the brightest channel in the whole course of our lives — our courtship.

Ours was a commonplace wooing enough. Two years before, when I was a stenographer in a prominent savings bank at Denver, Jack had entered their employ as receiving teller. Some time when he becomes a *story* teller Jack may divulge how he came to fall in love with me. I cannot. There could, of course, be no question as to why *my* heart began to double shuffle the instant we met. (I remember that I was surreptitiously curling my hair behind the door, and he entered the room without warning. My cheeks still burn whenever I think of my predicament.) His Gibson chin alone would have won me, and when, in addition, there were deep gray eyes, darkened by heavy black brows and lashes, a firm mouth, wont to curve into charming, unexpected smiles, and the fine, stalwart figure of the Westerner toned to the easy grace attained at an Eastern college — well, since he is my husband, I confess that I gave him my heart on that first day. Fortunately, I had his in exchange, so I felt never a whit of inconvenience from the loss.

The first year of our bethrothal passed sunnily away. We smiled pityingly upon the rest of the world and took occasional peeps through rose-colored glasses into that vague future existence when we should be man and wife, but, with Jack's income at "sixty per," we decided not to enter into any definite plans for awhile at least.

About that time there swept over the country one of those insidious epidemics which occasionally seize upon thousands of our able-bodied citizens and send them thronging to the West. 'Twas the gold fever. Poor Jack caught the infection in its most virulent form, and for weeks raved about nuggets and quartz and veins and diggings until, in due time, I, too, was stricken, though with a much milder case. From rose-colored our prospects had changed to a dazzling, untarnished golden. It seemed hard for us to face the dark year which he must spend in the mining district while I lived a weary, Jackless life in Denver, but we resolutely closed our eyes to that picture and revelled in Monte Cristo dreams.

Nevertheless, it was a black day when Jack started for the Hills, and our parting was far different from the heroic one we had planned.

Soon, however, came his letters, full of hope and encouragement; he seemed to have settled into a very world of gold. Gold there was to the right and to the left; gold underfoot; gold fairly bursting from the ground all around him! To be sure, *his* good fortune had not yet begun — truth to tell, Jack had not uncovered so much as a single nugget; but he declared, undaunted, his turn would come. All his letters were written in the same vein — I began to know them nearly word for word. Still he optimized, still labored without result, and still I tried to hope, despite the cruel sinking of my heart. Then suddenly those letters ceased. By calendar time there passed but one month of silence — my heart measured out long years of pain during that anxious waiting. Then came a letter written in a strange hand, summoning me to Jack's bedside. Camp fever had seized him and, already weakened by the unwonted hardships he had undergone, he was slowly losing in the struggle with this new enemy. Tossing about in his wild delirium, he called for me incessantly, and it was thought that my presence might save his life — if I could arrive in time.

It took me a week to reach him, but he had waited. When he realized it was I leaning over him, when he heard me pleading with him to live for my sake, he stopped trying to die, and let my arms draw him back into the life from which he had so nearly slipped away. And two days later we were married by a dear little minister whose exhortations in regard to laying up treasures in heaven had been temporarily suspended in order that he, too, might join the mad rush in search of treasures in the earth. My husband's convalescence was long and tedious, but at last came the day when we gathered our traps, saddled Romeo and Juliette, our mules, and set out across the plains. And this is how we came to be travelling eastward, homeward, together, with not a nugget of gold in our packs, but with staunch hearts, ready to fight our way back to the world we had deserted.

My thoughts having unwittingly crept back to the present, my attention again became entirely engrossed with the storm. Such

a deluge! It scarce needed my excited fancy to convince me that we had fallen into the clutches of some half-starved ogre, called up from my fairy-tale days. It seized upon our little tent and rattled it viciously; it howled and roared and lit up every corner with its angry glare, bombarding us, meanwhile, with volleys of hailstones and drenching us with driving sheets of rain, against which our flapping canvas offered but paltry resistance. I felt Jack's steady hand pushing back the wet hair from my forehead, and I grasped at it convulsively — then suddenly the whole earth seemed to explode with one awful flash and roar.

Probably 'twas but a few moments that we lay there stunned. When I recovered it was still light — far lighter than before the storm. The magic saffron afterglow was over everything, and in its brightness my eyes opened to see Jack's white face just above me, his eyes seeking mine with agonized intensity, his hot breath gasping between his parted lips. Then came his voice: "Don't be frightened any more, little one! It's all over." My addled brain was slow to grasp the catastrophe. Lazily my gaze wandered past Jack to the boulder, where Romeo was making frantic efforts to free himself. His mate lay stark on the ground. With a cry of horror, as my last spark of comprehension returned, I staggered to my feet and clung dizzily to Jack, staring around me at the grim havoc of the storm.

A tattered, bedraggled heap of canvas, which a few moments before had been our tent; the contents of our packs, converted into almost unrecognizable rubbish, scattered about in wildest confusion; and a lame mule, scarcely better than his dead companion, since he could hardly bear my light weight alone — such was the inventory of all our earthly possessions.

"Looks pretty black, eh, Dolly?" Again came Jack's cheeriness to buoy me up. "But don't look so knocked-out! After all, it might be worse — one lame mule's better than none, and most of the food is canned, so we can save it if we hustle around. And I guess we can save a few yards of canvas out of the wreck — to keep off the dampness," he added whimsically, wringing the water from his jacket. Then, as I still hung back:

"Come, little wife, show your colors!" he shouted, and, with his indomitable light-heartedness, darted off in search of lost goods,

calling for me to follow. Clearly he was set on pretending the whole affair was to him but a huge joke, perpetrated for his especial amusement. My colors, I fear, did not show to advantage. Weary with travel and still under the debilitating influence of the lightning shock, I trudged dejectedly after him, endeavoring vainly to respond to his mood, but the laugh which I forced out ended in a sigh, and I stopped and rested my feverish cheek on the cool, smooth surface of the boulder. Must I be counted disloyal if I confess that as I gazed again at the devastation about me there came a moment's pang — a fleeting regret for the comforts of my Denver home — my bright little office in the Trust Company building, with its happy associations and pleasant routine of daily duties? I half smiled as I remembered the girlish enthusiasm with which I had mastered my beloved stenography, fired by ambition to become a strong-minded, independent business woman. And here was I, vanquished in my very first combat with the world I had so eagerly challenged! Of what use was my stenography — my only practical accomplishment — in the midst of this ruin? My bitter self-condemnation was suddenly broken by the clear, bright whistle of the "Bob White" — a signal which Jack and I had used so often on our journey — and I started up to answer — but instead of the two familiar notes, my puckered lips emitted a long, low whistle of amazement; for there, where my body had rested against the rock, clearly distinguishable in the waning light, was traced an outline, about two feet in length:

I thought at first — and almost hoped — that it was an hallucination arising from my revery. Then, as my wonder and perplexity wore away, I passed my hand over the curious blue-black pattern, and found it indelibly stamped on the creamy white quartz. It was real then; but was it magic — witchcraft — what? The boulder had been perfectly blank before the storm!

"Jack!" I shouted. "Jack!"

He was beside me instantly.

"What's up?" he asked. "Ill? Come — sit here a minute."

"No — no! Look here, Jack." I pointed to the marks. "Here's the inscription we needed."

Jack examined it carefully, then turned to me, half-sobered for the minute.

"Well, that *was* close! The rock has been struck by lightning, Dolly. That inscription was written by Jove's own hand — it might be of some value to autograph fiends. Wonder what the old fellow had to say." And he studied it again.

My heart was beating tumultuously with my discovery.

"I can read it, Jack," I whispered.

"Ho-lee smoke! Has the lightning gone to your brain?" he cried teasingly.

"No, I'm sane enough — I would be a disgrace to my profession if I couldn't read good legible shorthand like that."

Jack no longer restrained his mirth.

"*Well!*" he shouted. "Hear the child 'talking shop' in spite of all that's happened! Can nothing shake you from your favorite hobby?"

But I was earnest.

"That says 'Dig here' as clearly as any Pitman shorthand ever written. '*Dig here*' — Oh, Jack, Jack! Don't laugh — don't tease — it means so much! Here's a message from Nature herself — she surely knows better than we where her gold is hidden. 'Dig here,' she says. Jack, perhaps our gold — our fortune — is under that stone." I caught one swift glance from those dark eyes — their quick, answering gleam — and I knew that my fancy had taken root in that susceptible mind. That was enough. Let him jest to his heart's content; I was convinced that his quizzing was but a feint to cover his own dawning superstition.

I thought it wisest to let the matter rest for awhile, and as darkness was fast closing in we hurriedly sought to provide some rude shelter for the night. Ours was a sorry condition; everything was drenched; our clothing still clung to our forms in sticky dampness, the tattered canvas was cast aside as worse than useless in its dripping state; but a myriad of stars glimmered protectingly above us, the soft, fragrant breeze bore sweet drowsiness on its

wings, and the occasional sentry call of the night owl echoed dreamily across the silent plain, so that my head had not been five minutes on its improvised pillow before I fell into a restful sleep. And once again my dreams glittered and sparkled with fairy gold.

I awoke with the first slanting glint of sunlight, but Jack was before me. As I sat rubbing my eyes in the momentary perplexity brought on by my changed surroundings, I saw him pacing restlessly up and down at the foot of the boulder, gaze bent eagerly on the ground, stopping now and again to overturn a stone with his foot or carefully sift a handful of loose gravel. But when he heard my step he swiftly straightened up and turned shamefacedly to meet me.

"Time for breakfast?" I called, passing over his evident discomfiture. "What shall it be — fried trout or broiled steak?"

Jack made a comical grimace.

"Call it potted ham and hard tack," he answered. "Though to be sure, there's Juliette, on a pinch!" he added thoughtfully.

Even this unsavory suggestion failed to daunt my healthy appetite, and I attacked my scant rations with a zest born of many days' "roughing" on the plains. Not so with Jack. He ate little and spoke less; it was clear that there was a struggle going on in his brain which occupied all his attention. Several times he glanced up furtively from under his lashes, as though about to speak, but on meeting my gaze his courage would dwindle off into a sheepish smile, and he fell back again behind his barrier of silence.

Still I held my peace — the development was rapid enough to need no forcing.

Suddenly his chest heaved in a deep, impatient sigh, and he sprang to his feet.

"Say, Dolly — I — I believe I'll — well, see here, we can't be ready to move on for several days and I — I suppose you'll not be happy till you see what's under that old headstone, so I'm going to investigate a little — for you."

What a world of pathos in his stumbling speech and manifest dread that I would see through the gauzy cloak of indifference with which he strove to conceal his eagerness!

"Do you think it worth the trouble?" I asked quietly.

"Well — I'll answer that after I've dug awhile. At any rate, I've found my pickaxe and spade, so it will be easy enough." He threw them across his shoulder and started toward the boulder without another word, avoiding my eyes — so unlike my frank, fearless Jack. But, half-way there, he flung down his tools and ran breathlessly back to me.

"Dolly, dear," he exclaimed, seizing my hands, "I'll own up! I am as superstitious in the matter as you are! I hate to acknowledge that I'm such a day-dreaming idiot, but I can't act the lie with your sweet eyes questioning me so. Come, now — sit beside me while I dig for our treasure." And, hand in hand, with hearts beating once more in eager unison, we ran blithely to the rock which guarded Aladdin's cave.

Had we not been spurred on by the memory of past bitterness and the prospect of still harder struggles to come, I fear we should have failed in our task. The fierce sun glared relentlessly down upon us, licking up every drop of moisture with its fiery tongue, so that by noon the whole plain lay parched and panting in the heat. The fitful breeze sighed its feeble life away at the first peep of day and left us hot and stifling during the long, tedious hours which followed. But Jack went into his work with feverish enthusiasm, never stopping for rest and asking no stimulant save a smile from me as I sat in the shadow of the huge pile. And so we passed the day; he digging with a vigor ill fitting his fever-worn body — I chatting and laughing with a brightness which belied my heavy heart. I fought bravely against fatigue, but toward evening gave up the struggle, and stretching wearily out upon the ground, I fell into a light slumber.

A few moments later I was startled back to wakefulness by the sudden silence around me. The thud of Jack's spade had stopped. Jack himself was nowhere in sight. I rushed to the other side of the boulder. There he crouched in a heap, his face buried in his grimy hands — utter prostration apparent in every line.

"Oh, my poor boy!" I sobbed, slipping my arms around his neck. "You are killing yourself, and it's my fault! Let us get away from this horrible place. Oh, how very foolish I have been — it's all my fault!" I moaned again.

He turned sharply to me, and I caught the flashing of his eyes; the glare of a maniac could not have been wilder. With a shout that was almost a shriek, he clutched me in his arms and fairly lifted me from the ground in his fierce embrace. Then, gently as a woman, he set me down, and stooping over the loose earth his spade had just upturned, he scooped up a handful and sifted it slowly into my lap. Seeing my amazement, he threw back his head with the first hearty laugh I had heard from him since he left Denver.

"My little wife," he said, kneeling beside me, "your lap is filled with gold — *gold!*" He enjoyed for a moment the dawning radiance which crept through the bewilderment on my face, then cried brokenly:

"Oh, Dolly, sweetheart, we have found our treasure! We are rich — rich! And it's your fault!" he added, with a glimmer of amusement.

After a few hours of pardonable exultation, we calmed down sufficiently to map out a course of action. Poor Jack had first to spend half the night in patiently overcoming the objections with which I greeted all his carefully devised plans, but finally I accepted the situation with the best possible grace, and even began to revel in the game of hazards I must play.

With hardly three weeks' provisions, and neither the equipment nor ability to work our claim unaided, it was imperative that we should push forward to Denver. On the other hand, we dared not leave the spot untended, for the general disorder would be sure to invite the notice of the most unsuspicious passer-by, and even had this not been the case, the lameness of the mule made it impossible for us to proceed together. There seemed, then, to be but one available scheme — I was to ride forward alone to secure assistance and leave Jack to do guard duty. The preparations for my journey naturally did not consume much time, and two mornings later found me in readiness. With a great assumption of bravery I tore myself from Jack's embrace, mounted my saddle, and with flourish of whip urged forward my stolid mule, who, far from collaborating with me in my desire for artistic effect, merely shook his head, emitted one terrific bray of remonstrance, and then hobbled disconsolately away down the trail. It was scarcely an im-

pressive departure, but a propitious one, since it called forth a peal of hearty laughter from Jack and enabled me to give him a last merry look ere I turned my face hopefully eastward, where the first tints of sunrise crept softly into the sky and lured me on with their rosy promise.

. . . . . .

Two weeks later I galloped safely back again, this time guiding a thoroughly equipped mining party, under the direction of two young cousins, lately returned from adventurous but futile prospecting in South America, and whom I had found in Denver bewailing the state of desuetude which seemed their lot in this prosaic country. They hailed me and my story with enthusiasm and plunged into the new enterprise with a heartiness and impetuosity equal to my own.

Within a week from the time of our arrival the works were well under way, with results which daily turned our most sanguine dreams to golden reality, for our boulder guarded the richest vein in the district. "Renford's Rock" is a proverb in the Hills, and has indeed become "sacred to the memory of" — our fortune.

Such a honeymoon as Jack and I spent a few months later in Rome! And while there we visited the studio of Jerome Ricardo, and unfolded some curious plans to that famous sculptor, and how tolerantly he smiled as he drew for us designs for an exquisite bronze statue of Jove. The figure of the deity is full of power and dignity. At his feet, with folded wings, rests his imperial eagle. From his upraised right hand leaps a jagged chain of lightning, while in place of the customary sceptre his left clasps a roll of parchment, on which are visible characters that at a glance appear to be fragments of ancient hieroglyphics, but on closer examination resolve into most excellent shorthand outlines. This last was a flight of my own imagination, and it was only on consideration of a snug addition to the already handsome sum he was to receive, that Signor Ricardo finally consented to countenance such gross inconsistency. Having so far departed from stereotyped ideals, he further entered into the spirit of his undertaking by imparting to Jove's usually fierce and warlike visage an expression of benign placidity more consistent with his philanthropic interest in us.

But it was left to Jack's fertile imagination to conceive the highest bit of uniqueness we have yet undertaken. To-day there arrived from the West a pedestal for our statue — a great white block of dazzling quartz, hewn from the side of our boulder. It is almost a perfect cube in shape, five of its sides symmetrical and polished to a wonderful degree of brilliancy; the sixth is left untouched by artist's hand, yet on its rounded surface is emblazoned the inscription:

Thus have we preserved Jove's written mandate.

And this evening Jove himself duly ascended this novel throne, from which he beams with bronzy satisfaction across the velvet lawn with its grand old trees, to the beautiful new residence which has just been completed for our use; and there is small doubt that his fierce old prototype, as he gazes down on our felicity, considers himself well repaid for the brief instant in which he threw aside his weapons of war and vanquished the indomitable forces which were closing in upon us with a single stroke of that mightier weapon of peace — the pen!

Goddo, the Holy Monkey.*

BY HENRY AUSTIN.

IT was noon in the Holy City on the bank of the Holy River — noon in slumberous but swarming Benares.

The huge anacondas lay in greasy and fetid folds in the Temple of the Divine Snakes.

The hideous apes were asleep near the fanes of the Sacred Monkeys — all but Goddo, the smallest of these divinities.

The attendant priests, or valets, of these simian and ophidian godlings were also wrapped in slumber — and little else — lying in curiously animal attitudes either within or just outside the cages of the temples. The most somnolent of silence prevailed, except for the occasional chatter of Goddo's teeth — for Goddo was ill.

There came along through the Temple yard two British officers in undress uniform, handsome, stalwart men, well burned by the Indian sun and many a brandy-and-soda. They were cursing the heat, the natives, the snakes and the superstitions of the country, and one had just been congratulating the other on a coming leave of absence.

"Yes, Tom; I shall sail from Bombay in a fortnight, and a couple of months later shall see the dear old home. I've a little brother by my father's second marriage, and I've been wondering what sort of a present to take along for the cub."

"Why not take him a Holy Monkey?" laughingly enquired the other, pointing to the cage they were about to pass.

"Not a bad idea," exclaimed Major Majoribanks, halting. "I could have fun with him on board ship, too. Passengers like to see the antics of a monkey in the rigging. Fancy I could buy one tolerably tame — not given to biting?"

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"Why, yes; these chaps are tame enough; they're quite used to their worshippers. Get the kid a Monkey God — he'd be quite a treasure."

"Let's try it. You speak Hindostani fairly well. Just see if one of these priests will sell his god for a reasonable sum. I wouldn't mind going twenty rupees."

Thus adjured, Tom walked up to Goddo's cage, and finding a priest near by, curled up comfortably, kicked the sleeper's foot. The Hindu slowly opened his eyes and stared sleepily. In bad but fluent Hindostani the Englishman explained. The attendant arose, looked at both men penetratingly, as if to read their characters, and then glanced rapidly about the Temple and the courtyard. No other waking priest was visible. Here was a chance to make a small fortune, and then, perhaps, escape to some other part of India, where he could have a wife and a home. Besides, he was not a full-fledged priest — only a neophyte. The crime would not be so great. Moreover, the chances were that the god would escape from his new custodian and return to the Temple. If questioned too closely, he could say that the infidel English took Goddo by force. No one would witness the transfer of money. Having thought all this out as rapidly as the working of the oriental intellect would permit, the Hindu spoke, with the slow grace of gesture peculiar to the East:

"I will sell little Goddo to the great soldier on four conditions: First, that the great soldier will never be cruel to Goddo, or permit others of the English race to do harm or offer offence to him. Second, that the great soldier will never tell any one that he bought him from me, since my life would be the forfeit. Third, that in case Goddo should escape and return hither the Sahib shall take no steps to retake him. Fourth, that my lord shall pay me here in hand for my god the sum of thirty pieces of silver — that is to say, thirty rupees."

Tom, who interpreted, fancied that a covert gleam quivered a second under the long dark lashes of the brown Hindu eye, but the silver was paid over, and it took nearly all in both officers' pockets. The priest quickly tied a strong cord to the monkey's brass collar, and the major departed with his prize. At their quarters Goddo was turned over to a servant, after Major Majori-

banks had administered to him a good dose of brandy and quinine, at the suggestion of an army surgeon, who had immediately diagnosed the animal's distress as a touch of fever and chills.

When the major took his monkey on board the ship *Rumchunder*, bound for London, via the Cape, Goddo's health was entirely restored. His antics certainly did amuse the passengers. One lady declared him to be "a perfect little love," and the major grew proud of his possession, and took pains to inform everybody that Goddo was no common animal, but one in the odor of sanctity, and, with the reverence due to exalted station, Goddo was not teased, but petted, and, in fact, given the freedom of the ship.

All went well for a month, and then the monkey, having learned the ropes — and pretty much everything else about the ship — developed a disposition more diabolic than holy. On both sailors and passengers he played an endless variety of pranks, from stealing any little article he could lay paw upon to slitting garments into ribbons with a pair of pilfered scissors. Nothing was safe from his predatory instinct. Like the soul of a Trust incarnate, he seized everything in sight.

One day it was the dashing Widow Maitland's case of cosmetics and toilet mirror. With this, in the presence of her rival admirers, Goddo proceeded to paint and powder, with a series of coquettish grimaces at the mirror that sent the Captain of the *Rumchunder* and Major Majoribanks into fits of laughter. The Captain did not laugh, however, when Goddo ran up into the crosstrees with his handsome watch and chain, and sat there dangling it out over the waves. A sailor got the watch, to be sure, but got it first in the shape of a buffet on the head that ruined the works.

From the hour the shining watch was taken from him, Goddo's temper seemed to change, and from being playful and merry his mischief became malicious. One moonlight night, when young Maltby and the widow had the after deck all to themselves, and Maltby was just at the most interesting point of a story most interesting to widows, Goddo crept up as an arm stole around the buxom waist and almost transfixed the coat sleeve with a long pin which he ran into the back of Mrs. Maitland. The lady leaped, shrieked and fainted, the doctor was called and Goddo skipped away grinning.

The Captain ordered the monkey put in irons, like any ordinary malefactor, and the sailor who finally caught him in the rigging swore he would never take such a biting and scratching again. Major Majoribanks, now the most unpopular person on board, stood up for Goddo with fine English obstinacy, and remarked prophetically that no good would come from tying up a monkey of rank, who when freed would revenge himself.

It did seem, especially to the sailors, more than a coincidence that no sooner did the prisoner begin to pine and refuse food than the weather, which up to this time had been extremely fine, began to be very rough. In the next few days the *Rumchunder* had several narrow escapes from going to the bottom, lost a topmast and several sails, and scared about everybody on board but the Captain, Major Majoribanks, who was unacquainted with fear, and Goddo, who from his place of durance in the "brig" could not see the storm.

Sailors are nothing if not superstitious, and as the heavy weather continued, one of them, who had heard a rumor that the monkey was a Hindu god, slyly released him, telling his shipmates to watch the result. As a matter of fact, aside from any speculation as to the cause, Goddo's liberation was immediately followed by a subsidence of the tempest. The clouds cleared away and the sun smiled again. The astute sailor bragged so much of his wisdom that it was soon bruited about the ship that Goddo had stilled the storm. The Captain swore at the sailors' superstition and talked of putting both the monkey and the man who had freed him back into irons, but Major Majoribanks grimly remarked that it was equally foolish to expect Providence to regard with favor a ship where a poor monkey was ironed like a common criminal for merely following the bent of his nature. Still, the fact that the release of Goddo and the end of the frightful storm were simultaneous did make an impression on some of the passengers, who began to regard the monkey as something uncanny.

It would be tedious and scarcely possible to chronicle all the cruel and malignant tricks which the monkey now continued to inflict upon both passengers and crew. They culminated at last in three atrocities which he contrived to perpetrate in a single day. One of the sailors, who had a mop of long yellow hair, was lying

asleep snuggled against one of the extra spars lashed on deck. Goddo searched the jackey's pockets, found some matches, and ignited the torch of hair. By the time the poor sailor had extinguished the blaze he looked like a singed cat, and cursing and weeping went to the surgeon for a soothing salve. Major Majoribanks gave the sailor a couple of sovereigns and heaved a sigh. Counting the three pounds in Indian silver originally expended, Goddo was becoming a costly possession.

Now the surgeon, being a bachelor without the consolation of religion, had to have something to adore, and the object of his worship was a goldfish of great size which he had owned for many years, and which he kept in a bowl hung in gimbals like the ship's compass, so that it swung level no matter how much the vessel careened. While the doctor was dressing Jack's head, Goddo slipped into the surgeon's stateroom, spied the goldfish, caught it, and scurried on deck, where he flung the shining, squirming thing into the sea.

The surgeon at first wept gently and murmured inarticulately, while the major stood by with an embarrassed air. Then he began to curse savagely, rejected a money offer with blasphemy, and swore he'd have Goddo's life or call out the major as soon as they reached port.

"Very well, sir," said the Major, hardening. "So be it. I've fought a variety of duels, but never with a madman, but I don't know as I object. I'd ten times rather risk leaden bullets from you than mercurial pellets, and if it comes to cold steel, a sword in your hands is less dangerous than a bistoury!"

The same day, toward sunset, the monkey possessed himself of a valuable carved and painted ivory fan, which the Widow Maitland employed very effectively in her flirtations. It was of extraordinary beauty, the carving representing a religious procession along the terraced banks of the Ganges, with the towers and balconies of Benares in the background, and was said to have been the property of that brave tigress, the Ráni of Jhánsi.

Mrs. Maitland called wildly to the sailors, offering a five-pound note for the rescue of the fan, but before Goddo could be caught the incentive to his capture had disappeared, for the widow's curio was in shreds and she was in hysterics in the arms of the surgeon.

"Be calm, my dear madam," he whispered; "be calm. You shall be avenged. We will catch that cursed imp and throw him overboard also."

So the widow and the surgeon and the singed sailor conspired, though it took a tidy sum of money to enlist the active coöperation of the sailor, on whom forecastle superstitions had a good hold. But he was needed in the business, and several nights later surprised Goddo napping near the crew's quarters, and went quietly for the doctor. When pounced upon by his captors, Goddo did not, as usual, offer to bite. He was in a mild and childlike mood and merely blinked his little eyes and yawned.

Sky and sea were quiveringly quiet, a host of throbbing stars flouted a pallid, dying moon, obscured by a few gauzy clouds, flitting by like monstrous bats. It was just the night for a maritime murder!

Stealing swiftly to the bow they tossed the Holy Monkey into the cradling arms of an ocean as smooth as the widow's mirror, for the vessel was in the tropics and there had been almost a dead calm for days.

The murderers looked into each other's faces and then up at the sky. It startled them with its great stars, like accusing eyes. The few light clouds had vanished. The silver skiff of the young moon, bearing the old one in its embrace, looked like a ghostly barge carrying a great dim weight of doom, to be dropped on some devoted head. Suddenly, through the cloudless, silent night, a long, slow, heavy boom, as of a distant gun with a trailing echo, broke upon their ears.

Then, as if from out the phosphorescence of the shimmering sea, sprang a colossal blaze of lightning, dazzling and nearly unbearable in its intensity. Like the very deep-sea Spirit of Murder, it again and again stabbed the night. The glassy waters began to shake like jelly, the ship tossed madly about, the lightning danced the deep with vaster and swifter leaps, and the wind, faint and zephyrous a moment before, roared like a thousand thunders, while every flash of lightning was accompanied by a terrific crash.

"Great God!" cried the surgeon, "It's an electric storm."

The crew were now crowding the deck, scurrying to shorten sail and relieve the sudden strain on the *Rumchunder's* spars, and

in the midst of the horrid din Major Majoribanks missed his pet and anxiously enquired if any one had seen it.

"Drowned — dead — damned!" answered the surgeon with whitening lips.

On, on, the great ship drove, minding not her wheel, plunging hither and thither like a suffering, sensate thing trying to escape the whips of the wind. All night she drove and no one slept, for each minute seemed surely to be the last. The sun rose, faintly seen, but the storm rose too, and billows like racing hills followed the ship and buffeted it along in its helpless flight. Over the stern the huge waves broke, flinging their spray far inboard. Near the wheelhouse were two large circular ports, in the olden style, with plateglass windows lighting the dining room. Against one of these a great green sea broke, shivering it like an eggshell, and in the water poured. Thither hastened the ship's carpenter to prevent a flood, and there, as he glanced outside, a little below the porthole, clinging to the rudder chains, was Goddo!

A very brine-drenched and bedraggled monkey he was, but safe and sound, and grinning and chuckling a greeting to the rescuing carpenter who helped him aboard. A cry of astonishment went up from the blanched beholders.

The gale fell away to a light breeze, the clouds cleared off and the sun smiled out like a master-magician over the lashing, flashing sea. It was of course some hours before the excitement entirely subsided with the waves, and the vessel was once more running easily on her course, but Goddo ruled supreme the rest of the voyage. His reputation for possessing more than animal attributes was fully established, and that is why, instead of becoming the pet of a little English boy, he found a spacious and peaceful cage in a renowned Zoölogical Garden, labelled "Goddo, the Holy Monkey."

A Twentieth Century Wedding.*

BY ANNIE REESE LOCKE.

"I WILL never forgive you, Richard, if you let anything prevent your return in good time for the wedding!" exclaimed Katherine Archibald, as she kissed her brother good-bye on the eve of his departure for Europe.

"I know how you are set upon my performing the ceremony, dear, and nothing shall prevent my early return," promised the Reverend Richard Archibald.

The wedding preparations went forward with gratifying smoothness till near the date when the absent clergyman expected to sail from Europe, when a letter came from him with the distressing intelligence that in climbing Monte Faccio he had met with a slight accident, which would, however, inevitably keep him to his room for several weeks to come.

"I need not say, dear Kate, how disappointed I am," the letter continued, "but, unless you can persuade Greyson to wait, another clergyman will have to officiate."

Katherine was ready to cry — so determined had she been that her newly ordained brother alone should read the service — though she was a young woman of much force of character, which her family sometimes called stubbornness.

"The wedding will simply have to be put off," she announced. "I suppose Percy will be furious, but it wasn't my fault that Richard hurt his knee."

She wrote immediately to her fiancé in New York, announcing the news and her decision, and by return mail received a most emphatic reply:

"It is impossible, darling, to wait longer than the 21st of September. My business renders it absolutely imperative that I should start for Cuba then, and you know how long I am liable to be de-

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tained there. Surely, you will not let the desire to have your brother perform the marriage prevent your going with me?"

"I can't let him go alone, and, oh, I can't give up my heart's desire!" murmured Katherine to herself as she retired to her room with this letter. Two hours of deep and anxious thought over her dilemma brought its solution.

"Katherine Archibald, you're a genius!" she chuckled, as she sped out to send a telegram telling her lover that the wedding would not be postponed, and to cable a message to her brother.

A week before the wedding Katherine received from Europe a box, which she opened in her own apartment.

"Here's Richard's present," she said, bringing down stairs an exquisite Swiss watch.

"It took an awful big box to bring that little thing, Kate!" cried her small brother, but the comment was lost in the admiring exclamations of the others present.

The eventful day arrived, and long before the hour set for the ceremony the prettily decorated rooms of Katherine's home were filled with guests.

"Who's to perform the ceremony, Mr. Pierce?" inquired one of them of the rector of the church the family attended.

"I really do not know," replied the rector, stiffly. "Mr. Archibald was to have officiated. In his absence I rather expected to have been called upon, but I find myself merely a guest."

The clock chimed the hour, the bridesmaids clustered at the door, and many pairs of eyes were turned upon the Reverend Mr. Pierce. The wedding march struck up, the bridesmaids filed in, the groom and his best man appeared from a side door, the bride entered on the arm of her father — but still no officiating minister stepped forward. The bridal party formed beneath a great floral bell, in front of a stand which was to serve as an altar.

But where on earth was the clergyman?

The guests leaned forward in breathless excitement, peering through the palms that surrounded and screened the space behind the stand. The bride and groom stood facing it. One hand of the best man fumbled for a moment among the flowers it supported. Instantly a low buzzing filled the room, followed by the sound of a strong, clear voice, beginning the service: